

2012 PARKS COMMISSION ANNUAL MEETING COMO PARK ZOO AND CONSERVATORY

Division Manager: Michelle Furrer

Issue # 1 – Construction Projects of Gorilla Forest that began in Fall 2011 and Japanese Garden Experience ground breaking in 2012.

- Positive impacts: Each project will bring World Class exhibits to Saint Paul free of charge.
- Negative impacts: Construction impacts some visitor experience and possible some revenue from displaced carts.
- Recommendations: Monitor the impact of construction on visitor experiences and determine alternative routes.
- *Commission Assistance: Support the referenced projects as part of the Parks and Recreation strategic plan.*

Issue # 2 – Como Regional Park Transportation Implementation Plan: On-going continuation to begin to implement Transportation Improvements in Como Regional Park including a Signage and Way finding plan, increase shuttle use and bus #5, and on going efforts to determine best parking and to communicate residential permit parking to guests.

- Positive impacts to the citizens of St. Paul: Visitors and residents will work together to find solutions for the transit, parking and circulation in and around Como Park.
- Negative impacts to the citizens of St. Paul: Working towards recommendations may incur costs as well as temporarily disrupt current parking and transportation.
- Recommendation: Initiate short term recommendations and begin to advance mid-term and long-term conversations and planning.
- *Commission Assistance: Support advancement of short-term initiatives and collaborate with the Como Regional Park Advisory Committee.*

Issue # 3 – Campus Framework and next improvement project planning and sequencing: The next improvement and asset preservation projects at Como are the Entrance Gardens and Pinniped habitat. In addition, refreshing the Campus Framework to recognize the recent achievements and begin the process to identify what's next after the Entrance Gardens and Pinnipeds.

- Positive impacts: The Campus improvements will provide better accessibility and update outdated animal habitats, continuing to make Como a world-class facility.
- Negative impacts: Once planning is completed, funding will need to be identified to execute.
- Recommendation: Begin planning for two projects in late 2012 and begin the planning process of revising the Campus Framework.
- *Commission Assistance: Support the referenced projects as part of the Parks and Recreation strategic plan.*

2011 Accomplishments

- Wyoming Toad breeding program first year
- Roots, Fruits and Shoots
- Interpretive monitor program
- Corpse Flower bloom
- New style Visitor Guide
- Increased Shuttle Users –New Mktg Tools
- Key Media attention
- Antelope & Giraffe Steering Committee
- Secured a family group of gorillas for Gorilla Forest exhibit.
- Finished Gorilla Forest design and began construction.
- Provided support for flood ravaged Minot Zoo by caring for bears, penguins and frogs.
- Opened Ribbit Zibbit amphibian conservation exhibit.
- Brought online a Sea horse exhibit in aquatics.
- Added another conservation program, Mississippi Gopher frogs.
- Received award from Polar Bear International
- Active.net conversion

2012 Strategic Plan Items

- French Impressionist themed Summer Flower Show & AAM Conference
- New Technology – Mobile App, QRC Codes, Security & Parking Text
- Training – interp screens, website, Active, Comet
- Transportation & Shuttle Planning Continuation – Shuttle #5 & Signage
- Edible Garden Year 2
- Hoofstock Facelift Planning
- Frog Pond & Excedra Repairs and garden updates and re-purpose Enchanted Garden to pollinator garden
- Legacy Amendment projects - Music & lecture series, added value show, interpretive graphics in Cats and plan for MMC signage and EdZooCation Tiny Tot Thursday Programs
- Ongoing Maintenance Projects – Fern/Orchid/NG Heat, propagation room move, marine mammal roof, Donor Plaza
- Restoration of the Palm Dome Fountain and *Crest of the Wave, Playdays*
- South Patio arbor, seating, stage
- Increase collaborations with professional organizations
- Radio conversion plan
- Evacuation plan for animals
- Animal escape plan review with local authorities

2013-16 Strategic Plan Items

- Updating Campus Framework Plan to develop sequence of next set of improvements
- 100 Year Anniversary
- Forecourt planning
- Conceptual Design of Pinniped Exhibit
- Accreditation